



Woolly at Wollstonecraft? By Rakesh Kumar

This year's Wollstonecraft Teams Congress finished as a tie between **CROMPTON** (Susan Crompton-Adam Edgton, Michael Prescott-Marlene Watts) and **BOCK** (Les Grewcock-Sтивен Bock, Nigel Rosendorff-Andrew Markovics). My team bumbled along in ovine fashion, somewhere in the middle of the field, but we still had lots of fun!

One of the interesting hands of the morning was this:

Board 18 ♠KT942
 Dlr: E ♥JT
 Vul: N-S ♦3
 ♣AQJ84

♠75 ♠AQJ83
 ♥65 ♥AKQ2
 ♦AKT862 ♦4
 ♣963 ♣K52

11 ♠6 N:
 7 19 ♥98743 S:
 ♦QJ975 E: 2♣4♦2♥3♠3NT
 3 ♣T7 W: 2♣4♦2♥3♠3NT

At our table the bidding was:-			
West	North	East	South
		1♠	P
1NT	2♣	3NT	AP

Most pairs played in 4S, sometimes doubled and almost always unsuccessful. Only 4 out of 20 EW pairs played in 3NT and only 2 made it.

North led ♥J to the ace and West played ♠A and ♠Q, discovering that spades had no hope of being set up and that there were only 8 tricks available, even counting the ♣K. Still, as North obviously had at least 10 black cards, it seemed clear that South would be guarding both diamonds and hearts, and would not enjoy having to discard as the hand progressed. Fortunately, North wasn't in a position to work out what the ending might be and didn't attack the diamond entry. The defence continued ♠10, ducked, then ♣A and ♣Q, also ducked. Four tricks had now been lost, so the count had been rectified for the impending squeeze. On the next club to the ♣K, South had to discard a diamond from ♥987 ♦QJ97, but now the play of the ♠J ruined him. He kept the hearts, guarding what he could see in dummy, so 3NT came home with two more heart tricks and ♦AK10.



The afternoon produced more than its fair share of distributional hands. Here's one:

Board 2 ♠AQ93
 Dlr: E ♥9
 Vul: N-S ♦AKJT63
 ♣J4

♠T75 ♠K86
 ♥KJ87632 ♥T
 ♦ ♦854
 ♣A75 ♣KQT986

15 ♠J42 N: 4♦1♠1NT
 8 8 ♥AQ54 S: 4♦2♠1NT
 ♦Q972 E: 3♣3♥
 9 ♣32 W: 3♣3♥

Results on this ranged from 3NT by South making 10 tricks (obviously East had not pre-empted with the 6-card suit – I think one should), assorted contracts in diamonds making 10 tricks, to 4H by West also making 10 tricks, including when doubled on two of 3 occasions. In fact unless NS switch to spades early in the defence, 4H always comes home by playing a low heart from the West hand towards the ♥10, because a singleton ♥9 turns up.



The computer generated two more crazy distributional hands in the last round. Would you regard this as a sound vulnerable 1♥ overcall in second seat, after a 1♦ opening on your right?

♠A
♥KT964
♦975
♣A963

I would have thought just about anyone would confidently overcall with this hand, with no expectation of the oncoming train wreck until the bidding continued P-P-X-all pass. This is why it was so disastrous:

Board 19 ♠J765
Dlr: S ♥AQJ852
Vul: E-W ♦T
♣85

♠A ♠T832
♥KT964 ♥73
♦975 ♦Q864
♣A963 ♣KJ2

8 ♠KQ94 N: 1♣2♦1♥3♠2NT
11 6 ♥ S: 2♣2♦1♥3♠2NT
15 ♦AKJ32 E:
 ♣QT74 W:

Three North/South declarers somehow succeeded in making 4S, but the other extreme was 3 declarers in the West seat going for -500 after the above auction. Two of those were in our match – **it was a flat board!**



Finally, a lead problem for you.

♠63
♥QT94
♦7542
♣Q74

At our table the bidding was:-			
West	North	East	South
			1♠
P	1NT	X	3♠
P	4♠	AP	

Partner's double obviously promised hearts.

Unfortunately if you lead hearts, you will be very sorry – I certainly was. Here's the complete hand:

Board 27 ♠T8
Dlr: S ♥8
Vul: Nil ♦JT98
♣AKT652

♠63 ♠AJ
♥QT94 ♥K763
♦7542 ♦AQ63
♣Q74 ♣J93

8 ♠KQ97542 N: 3♣3♠
4 15 ♥AJ52 S: 3♣3♠
13 ♦K E:
 ♣8 W:

Declarer took the ♥A, cashed ♣AK throwing the ♦K, then played the ♦J, covered by ♦Q and ruffed, heart ruff, ♦10 covered by ♦A and ruffed, another heart ruff and then the last heart was discarded on a high diamond. Trumps broke 2-2 so 12 tricks were made! Only 5 declarers received a diamond or spade lead, thus making fewer than 10 tricks – sadly our teammates were amongst them. It's a tough game some (most) days!